

Congressman Jesse Jackson, Jr., today said, "I'm extremely disappointed that the Republican leadership has caved in to the extreme right-wing of its conservative base and pulled from the legislative calendar a vote on the "Fannie Lou Hamer, Rosa Parks and Coretta Scott King Voting Rights Reauthorization and Amendments Act of 2006" (H.R. 9).

"It appears that rather than legislate, Republicans have chosen to play politics and to create wedge issues to use in the mid-term elections in November. Look at the issues they've chosen to mobilize their base vote around: first immigration, then 'don't desecrate the flag' amendment, followed by accusations that Democrats are 'cutting and running' in Iraq, and now 'problems' with the Voting Rights Act.

"The 1965 Voting Rights Act Extension is a bipartisan and bicameral bill that has overwhelming support among both Democrats and Republicans. I want to commend the House Judiciary Committee Chairman, James Sensenbrenner (R-WI-5), and the ranking Democratic Member, John Conyers (D-MI-14), CBC Chair Mel Watt (D-NC-12), all of their congressional and committee staffs, and the broader civil rights community for their education, mobilization and hard work around this issue. They've produced a good product. It will continue to give assurance that all Americans may vote free of discrimination.

"While I strongly and fully support renewal of the 1965 Voting Rights Act, I want to remind the American people that they still don't have an *individual citizenship right to vote* in the Constitution! That would require the addition of a constitutional amendment - a voting rights amendment - that I offered in the 107th, 108th and 109th Congress, H.J. Res. 28, and will continue to offer in the future.

"The politics and obstructionist tactics should stop. The vote should be taken as soon as possible and when taken I'm sure it will receive an overwhelming vote," Jackson concluded.